(c) if so, the reaction of Government in this regard; and

(d) what steps Government propose to take to implement National Highway projects in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) The Government is aware of the position indicated in the news item in question.

(b) to (d) There has been growth of vehicle population on the National Highways but due to resource crunch, it has not been possible to develop the National Highways to the desired level. However, efforts are made to keep the National Highways in traffic worthy condition within the available funds. In order to augment the budgetary sources, it is proposed to involve the Private Sector participation also in the construction, maintenance and operation of fee based facilities on National Highways on BOT (Build, Operate and Transfer) basis.

Privatisation of inland waterways

1329. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA:
SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM:

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have recently taken a decision to open up the Inland Waterways to be private sector for carriage of cargo;

(b) if so, the details of the private sector companies shown interest in this regard:

(c) whether the cargo handling situation at various ports will be improved as a result thereto; and

(d) if so, to what extent?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) The National Waterways being maintained by the Central Govt. are opened for navigation by private as well as Govt. agencies for movement of cargo and passengers. Therefore, the Govt. taking a decision recently to open up the Inland Waterways to the private sector for carriage of cargo does not arise.

(b) However, to ascertain the chances of more private participation in operating vessels in the National Waterway No. 1 (The Ganga) for movement of cargo like crude oil, coke, coal, etc., an advertisement was made in newspapers in June, 1994 and the response was encouraging, as about 60 applications were received.

(c) and (d) The National Waterways (Ganga, Brahmaputra and West Coast Canal) are not directly connected with ports export the ports of Calcutta|Haldia with Ganga and Cochin with West Coast Canal. In respeyt of Calcutta|Hadlja and Cochin, cargo handling situation may improve.

Uncleaned DTC and STA Buses in Delhi

1330. SYED SIBTEY RAZI: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the report captioned "Dirty buses add to commuters' woes" which appeared in the Hindustan Times dated the 9th July, 1994;

(b) if so, facts of these reports;

(c) whether the Depots under DTC have a post of Duty Officer to ensure proper cleanlines of buses before these are sent out for commuters' use;

(d) whether the buses under STA have some permit conditions to ensure cleanliness of buses;

(e) if so, details thereof;